kewa

NEWSLETTER OF THE LONDON CHAPTER, ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER, 1980 80-7,8

MEETING NOTICE

Dana Poulton of the Museum of Indian Archaeology will be speaking at this month's meeting. He will present a talk entitled *The Archaeological Survey of the Catfish Creek Drainage, Elgin County, Ontario* at 8:00 P.M. on November 13 in the Museum Gallery.

While we cannot expect a Symposium sized audience, let's see a good turnout!

SEE YOU ON THURSDAY....

SYMPOSIUM REPORT

What can I say? The compliments to our Chapter are still rolling in, and there is little doubt that the Society's Seventh Annual Symposium was the most successful to date. Paid attendance at the meetings amounted to 175 persons, but 200 would be a more accurate attendance estimate. One hundred and ten persons paid for a surprisingly good roast beef dinner and an excellent talk by Dr. Charles Cleland. As Chapter members, we all have a right to feel proud.

The individual cooperation was tremendous, including the work of organizers such as Jim, Norah and Rob; the technical support of Bob Mayer and Betty Kirk, and the support of members such as Janet Hunten and Ron Williamson, who opened their homes to provide free accommodation for students. To those members who manned the registration desk, the publications desks, led the tours on Sunday and assisted in a multitude of other ways, all we can say is THANK YOU.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Following the excitement and madness of the Symposium, your executive is trying to return to the more mundane (but no less important) work of guiding the Chapter. Jim hopes to hold a regular executive meeting prior to the general meeting on November 13. Major topics of discussion will include the upcoming Chapter executive elections (yes its that time again!), a programme for future general meetings, the Chapter Christmas Party, Chapter field activities in 1981, the results of the recent O.A.S. "First Ministers' Conference", plus the Chapter's budget submission to the Toronto Society executive.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE CHAPTER EXECUTIVE

Those wishing to nominate members to run for executive office in the Chapter are requested to send written notice to Mr. Bob Mayer (Chapter Nominating Committee) at 55 Centre Street or present the nomination to Bob at this month's meeting. The elections will be held at our December general meeting/Christmas Party.

EDITOR'S NOTE

As the Chapter faithful will have noted, this issue marks the first time that two KEWA numbers have been combined. I can only apologize for the lack of an October issue and point to the Symposium as a major factor in this failing.

Last month's meeting was announced by telephone to the membership, but for those of you who were unable to attend, the topic of the presentation was *An Archaeological Survey of the Ezousas and Xeropotamos River Drainages in Southwestern Cyprus* or how I spent my summer vacation. Your editor presented a slide illustrated talk concerning his Mediterranean survey experiences last summer, which held the meeting enthralled - at least no one left and few in the audience were moved to oblique comments concerning sheep.

Ian Kenyon was to have contributed this months research report, but unfortunately just before deadline Ian contracted a severe case of lassitude. So instead he offers the following extract on the Nomlaki's use of chert.

THE NOMLAKI AND STONE CHIPPING

Archaeologists working in Northeastern North America have an enormous interest in the use of chert by native peoples (just look at the past issues of *KEWA*), but often their interpretation of stone chipping is hampered by the almost total absence of local ethnographic data for this topic. In the eastern Great Lakes, the art of stone chipping was lost by many groups as early as the late 17th century. In western North America, however, some peoples continued to work stone into recent times. The following is an extract from Walter Goldschmidt's *Nomlaki Ethnography* (University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, Vol. 42, No.4, 1951). The Nomlaki were a hunting and gathering group who lived in northern California. By 1936 (when Goldschmidt did his field work), chert was no longer being worked, but the older residents still remembered the time when the Nomlakis were a stone age culture. Although this group lived far from Ontario somehow there is a familiar ring in Goldschmidt's account. It is not surprising to learn that the three major raw materials were differentially valued, apparently according to their inherent flaking properties. Also it is illuminating to find that the lithic types entered into the Nomlaki's spiritual world -- there is a network of taboo and magic surrounding the use of chert. Goldschmidt seems to be somewhat puzzled by the heating of chert, but, as later shown by Crabtree and others, this heating was probably done in order to improve the flaking quality. Lastly, note that, among the Nomlaki, arrow points were made only by the gifted few, the flint knapping specialists (although certainly this is not true of all ethnographically recorded cultures):

> "Securing and chipping flint and obsidian were necessary steps in arrow making.
>
> Apparently there were three types of stone used, which in ascending order of value were: mottled chert found in small

nodules along stream beds in the foothill area; pink chert or flint from Yolla Bolly Mountain, where ledges are to be found; and the obsidian from the Mount Shasta region. Their relative values, inherent in their natural qualities, were accentuated by the mystical values attributed to them by the Nomlaki.

The first of these three was simply picked up where found. Expeditions, consisting of two or three individuals, were occasionally sent to the Yolla Bolly beds to get the red flint, a trip taking about three days. Such a party might be sent by someone desiring flint, or the men might get it to sell or to make arrow points for trading. This flint was "poisonous" and was sold to warriors. The members of the expedition "understood flint" and could get the proper kind, but they would also get poorer kinds of flint for common arrows. They would each bring back several nodules, to a total of about two hundred pounds, carrying this in a hunting pack sack netted out of fiber cord, about the size of a fifty pound floor sack. These sacks were open at the top and were carried by a string over the shoulder.

The obsidian was derived by trade from the Shasta area, probably from the Wintu. In native belief the obsidian was endowed with powers of poisoning, and whereas a doctor could extract the red flint from a wound, he was powerless against a slight wound made by the obsidian. The red Yolla Bolly flint was also "poisonous", but apparently to a lesser extent.

Flint nodules were broken into workable smaller pieces by means of slow, even heating and chips were separated with a chisel of bone or horn hammered on the butt end. The resulting flakes were then heated by contact with hot stones and chipped with hard blue pebbles of various sizes. The purpose of this heating was not made clear. They were pressure-flaked with pieces of bone.

The craftsmen who made flint and obsidian blades were specialists who had esoteric knowledge or power that enabled them to do this work. Even so, an element of "luck" influenced the outcome.

(Jones:) The flint chipper is not usually the arrow maker. Not everyone can do this work. They say it is luck that goes against them, and even an expert might have luck to go against him.

Because of the magical property of poisoning, it was dangerous to work with flint, and the artisan must avoid being cut when he handled obsidian. Similarly, women were not allowed to handle the material, especially menstruants.

Beside arrow points, knives and spear points were made of flint and obsidian."
(Goldschmidt 1951, pp. 418-9)

NINETEENTH CENTURY NOTES

PLAIN CREAMWARE

IAN KENYON

The outstanding characteristic of creamware is its yellowish or greenish-yellow glaze. In the last half of the 18th century creamware was a very common tableware and it was produced in a wide variety of forms which often had moulded border decorations. The creamware found in early 19th century Ontario is usually quite plain and consists mainly of plates and dishes that would have been used side by side with decorated pearlware pieces. The illustration below is taken from the Leeds Pattern Book (this edition first published in 1794). Patterns 165 (called "Bath") and 166 ("Paris" or "Plain") are typical of the simpler types of creamware found in early 19th century Ontario (pattern 167, "New Queen's", **is a derivative of the more elaborate 18th century forms).**

Most of the creamware sherds encountered in rural southwestern Ontario should date no later than circa. 1830 and they are usually from the plain, flatware forms discussed in the previous paragraph. Banded ceramics, however, are sometimes made of creamware and these appear to occur throughout the first half of the 19th century.